



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Former Employee of Residential Program is Convicted and Sentenced for Criminal Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult**

**Washington, D.C.** - A former counselor at Careco, Inc., a provider of residence services for individuals with developmental disabilities, pled guilty and was sentenced for Criminal Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult, Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips and District of Columbia Inspector General Charles J. Willoughby announced today.

On July 9, 2009, Sheila Holland (a.k.a. Sheila Thomas), 39, of Washington, D.C., was sentenced following her guilty plea to one count of Criminal Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia before the Honorable Anthony C. Epstein. Judge Epstein sentenced Holland to 90 days in jail, all suspended, and three years of supervised probation. Holland was also ordered to stay away from Careco, Inc., the victim, and not to work with vulnerable adults. In addition, Holland was ordered to pay \$100 to the Victims of Violent Crime Compensation Fund.

According to the government's evidence, on December 15, 2008, Holland was a residential counselor for Careco, Inc. and directly responsible for the care of a Careco resident who attended a day treatment program for persons with disabilities at United Cerebral Palsy (UCP). While under Holland's care at UCP, a UCP employee witnessed Holland slap the victim as she quietly ate her lunch. Another UCP employee who was nearby heard Holland slap the victim.

In announcing the conviction and sentence, Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips and Inspector General Willoughby praised the work of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit for its investigation of the abuse. Mr. Phillips and Mr. Willoughby also commended Special Assistant United States Attorneys Lisa Matsumoto and Dangkhoea Nguyen who jointly prosecuted the case.

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